

22SEP05

This is a statement from Daniel R. Moon, BM2, USCG concerning the sinking of the Sydney Mae II on the night of 19 Sep 05. I was in charge of the Beach Party which consisted of MK2 T. Fisher, BM3 B. Paplinski, BM3 B. Mandsager, MK3 J. Minter, SN B. Allan, SN B. Rapalee, FN R. Alther, FN S. Austin, SN J. Rhoad and I.


The 10 of us split up into two vehicles and kept in touch via radio. At about 2240 while heading north our truck was flagged down by Patrick Sullivan and another gentleman (name unknown) and reported to me that they had found a body of an elderly lady (later identified as Ginger Strelow). Both vehicles stopped to assist. Once with Ms. Strelow she had only a tank top, jeans and tennis shoes on, no life jacket. I took Patrick Sullivan's spot light and used it to get the attention of Lower Umpqua's Dune Rescue truck that was a couple hundred yards south of our position. SN Allan proceeded to do chest compressions. Once Lower Umpqua was on scene I got a mask and breather bag from them and continued to do CPR with FN Allan. Lower Umpqua personnel hooked the patient up to their AED, but no shock was warranted according to the machine. The Lower Umpqua personnel called their Doctor and gave him the vitals and description of the situation. The Doctor said to stop CPR and FN Allan and myself stopped. The beach crew then helped Lower Umpqua personnel wrap the victim and transfer her onto a backboard. The backboard was then loaded into Lower Umpqua's vehicle and I was told that the victim would be transported to Dune County Mortuary in Reedsport via Lower Umpqua ambulance which was staged in the 1st parking lot.

At this point we split up into three vehicles and continued to comb the beach. A few life jackets and some other miscellaneous debris was found along the beach. The beach party continued combing the beach until about 0100 because of lack of visibility and a rising tide it made it dangerous to drive and search the beach. With concurrence from Sector North Bend the Beach Party was secured at approximately 0112.

At 0630 the Beach Party departed station for the beach to conduct a first light search. The beach party consisted on BM3 B. Paplinski, SN B. Rapalee, SN J. Rhoad and I. We started at the south jetty of the Umpqua River and headed south. Along the way we picked up numerous life jackets and larger chunks of the Sydney Mae II. Once we were approximately ½ nm south of Ten Mile Creek we located another body, and later discovered it was that of Billy Harris. Mr. Harris was naked with the exception of his boots and pants, in which the pants were held to his ankles by his boots. He was lying on his back with his hands on his stomach. There was blood on the sides of his head and coming from his ears. I notified station via cell phone of the finding. Station asked for me to check his wallet in which I did and located numerous fishing and hunting licenses with the name Billy Harris. This was later confirmed by SN B. Rapalee who inspected the wallet more closely and found Mr. Harris' Oregon drivers license. The station had informed me that they wanted me to take the body with me and meet up with the coroner. We (Beach Party) placed Mr. Harris on a back board and placed Mr. Harris in the back of the Ford F-150 Beach Rig and covered him with a yellow disposable blanket. Due to the possibility of another body on the beach we continued south to pickup any survival gear and take positions of larger pieces of debris. Once we were 15nm south of the Umpqua River, the debris became scarce so we turned around and headed back to Winchester Bay. A few larger pieces of the vessel had beached itself from the time we went south till the time we came back north. Sta. Coos Bay had met us at Ten Mile creek and assisted with searching, where they gave us a few life jackets and a life ring from the Sydney Mae II.

I received a call from BMC Herrera stating that the Cornier office was going to call but I instead got a call from Douglas County Sheriffs Deputy Mark Humboldt who stated he would like for us to meet him at Dune County Mortuary in Reedsport with Mr. Harris. We proceeded to the mortuary and met with the deputy and gave him Mr. Harris' body and wallet. Deputy Humboldt took down the Beach Party's names and took down the position of where the body was found.

This statement is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.


Daniel R. Moon, BM2 USCG